

CATALOGUE OF AN
EXHIBITION OF

LITHOGRAPHS
of WAR WORK in the
UNITED STATES

by Joseph Pennell

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND
NOTES BY THE ARTIST



Worcester Art Museum

JANUARY SIXTH TO
JANUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH
NINETEEN-EIGHTEEN

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I HAVE never passed such an interesting—such an exciting—such a varied year in my life—and besides this, I hope I have been able to accomplish something, in my work, which shall show one phase of the Wonder of the World's Work of to-day. I was honored a year ago by being permitted by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George to make drawings in the various factories and works and ship yards which were engaged in war work in England—and the records of what I saw were published as Lithographs of War Work in England, a previous volume in this series. Now though I do not believe in war I do not see why some pictorial record of what is being done to carry on the war should not be made—made from an artist's standpoint—for we are in it—being in the world—but I am not of it.

When my work—or as much of it as I was allowed to do—was finished and exhibited, I was invited by the French Minister of Munitions, M. Albert Thomas, to visit and make studies of similar subjects in that country, but—owing to a combination of unfortunate circumstances—though I went to France twice during the summer of this year, I was unable to get anything of importance. This was my fault, or my misfortune—I failed and the memory of my failure will haunt me and be a cause of regret to me all my life—unless I am able to wipe out my failure—in another visit to France. But though I failed to make any drawings, or records of the subjects I was so freely shown—I was shown on my two visits many subjects which were supremely interesting—could I have but drawn them, they would have been worth doing. Not only was I taken to the front, but I was also taken to see some of those parts of France which have been fought over, some of the towns which have been destroyed—and some of the land which is desolate. Then I came home, for I believe the place for an American at the present time is at home. And on my arrival I was authorized to make records similar to those I had made in England, and had failed to make in France. What I have done in the United States is shown on these walls.

I have had more opportunities of seeing what is being done in war work in England, France, and the United States than any one else—and in a fashion that no one else has been permitted to see—war in the making. Yet I did not do these drawings with any idea of helping to win the war, but because for years I have been at work—from my earliest drawings—trying to record the Wonder of Work—and work never was so wonderful as it is to-day. And never had any

one such facilities—such aid, such encouragement given him to record its wonder —and by the governments of the three great countries which are engaged in this incredibly horrible, absolutely unnecessary war.

Not only have I seen the Wonder of Work in these three lands—but before the war I saw it in Belgium, Germany and Italy. I have drawn it everywhere, save in Luxemburg, and there too I have seen it—but made no drawings—for it was so easy to get to that land—and so that country was put off for a more convenient season—a season which I fear will never come again. I am not going to make comparisons—but I am going to say that the Wonder of Work is more wonderful in the United States than anywhere else in the world to-day. True, we are not working with that unbelievable energy which the French and English—yes, the English—have put at last into their work—but we do so much more—with so much less appearance of work—we are working for the Allies—but they are not working for us. And we are doing for them what they cannot do for themselves. In Europe the war worker works all day and every day in the year. Here most of the great industrial works have only added war work to their peace work. In Europe scarce anything else but war work is being done.

And also in America the women have not to any extent gone into the factories, mills and ship yards of the country. And I hope they never will. I have never seen a woman shell maker here, only women making fuses and doing other light work, yet I know of factories in France and England where there are scarce any work people save women—one where there are ten thousand—but I have not seen a woman at a lathe, in this country. I have never seen a woman ship builder here, yet I have seen women in ship yards abroad doing work that men would have grumbled at when put to it—because it was thought hard work—before the war.

And I am glad that our women are not forced to undertake such work, and hope they never may be; for I have seen the black side of this work, which already has led to strikes and labor troubles in Europe—and when the war is over will lead to greater trouble—for the captains of industry in Europe tell me that women run machines better than men—they devote themselves to the machine—never try to improve it—to make changes in it—only to keep it going and in good order; while the man is always trying to improve it, to make it do more, so that he can do less—“stick matches in it,” one manager said—while the women just run the machines as they are shown how.

But making shells is more interesting than washing dishes or waving flags and marching in parades—and more exciting—but there will be an end to that some day; and the lathes—which have been

turned to war work—will be turned back to peace work—and the question is, will the women go back to their dishes?—and if they don't will there be more trouble? I have seen a woman's strike—or a little of it—forthwith the manager who was showing me around and I left at once. It was not an orderly, peaceful, or womanly strike. That shop was no place for me. Those women were not ladylike.

But just as the greatest human energy has been given to war work, given to make things for man to explode, to kill, to destroy; so the greatest machines have been turned to do this work with the greatest skill and accuracy and the greatest speed—the workers are but a necessary detail—and it is the working of the great machinery in the great mills which I find so inspiring—so impressive—for the mills are shrines of war—though the churches now try to rival them. But the mills are the modern temples and in them and not in the churches do the people worship. And if only the engines turned out more engines of peace—how much better would the world be—but everything made in a war factory is made to destroy and to be destroyed. But one must not think of that; for if one did the war would stop, and not every one wants it to stop—or it would stop. But war work in America is the most wonderful work in the world and that is the reason why I have drawn some of the work I have seen—seen in these endless looms of time, where history is being woven.

I want to thank the Secretaries of the Navy and of War, Messrs. Daniels and Baker, Mr. Creel, and the other members of the board and staff of the Committee on Public Information; and the various heads of the various sub-departments of the army and navy, who stood my pestering and querying and obtained for me permission to visit every industrial establishment I wanted. Every plant, camp, yard, works, field, which I wanted to work in—I was taken to and treated with a courtesy which I shall never forget. I should like to thank and mention by name the various officials, government and civilian, who gave me every facility to see and to draw everything I wished—but we are at war, and I am not permitted to say where these drawings were made; and if I mentioned the names of some of the directors of these works the places in which I made the drawings would be known. As it is, I imagine many of them are pretty well known already. And finally I wish to thank above all the man who made it all possible. He knows—and I know—I shall never be able to repay him—he is working and I am trying to work for our country—Dr. Frederick Paul Keppel.

JOSEPH PENNELL.

CATALOGUE

THE AMERICAN SERIES

1 BUILDING THE CAMP

All sorts and conditions of machines and of men were at work on it. The steam-shovels removing mountains, gutters being dug as big as trenches, buildings going up and trees coming down as far as one could see—and further—the ideal of the man who said to me, as he looked over the tree-falling, town-rising landscape—“Gosh, it’s fine! I am a carpenter here, but I never did no carpentering, ’cept I once did help the carpenters to build a house with my pocketbook; but now I am getting six dollars a day, and—well, as it looks like a shower, I guess I won’t pay the doctor ten dollars to cure a cold.” So we came away in a jitney.

2 THE CAMP—THE NEW ARCHITECTURE

In the centre of the new city is something like a long train of box cars—yet when you see their sides you find they are houses. As you look they grow—and from a few holes in the ground till the building is finished takes about forty-five minutes. They are better built than the English munition towns—but they are unbelievable—these cities of fifty thousand inhabitants built while the army was formed. This drawing is but a bit—to right and to left and behind the town stretched—the embodiment of usefulness, respectability—a triumph of ugliness.

3 THE EMBARKATION CAMP—THE CLASSIC GROVE

No, this is not in Italy, but America. Another proof that the classical, the romantic landscape is all about—only if it had not been that the Embarkation Camp was by this grove, I never should have seen it.

4 THE OLD HANGAR

All the inventor's past life hung from the roof, successes and failures, trials and tribulations—and this old hangar, like an old barn, was worth drawing. Doubtless the new ones are better suited to their purpose, but they are most unpicturesque, and so will all the world be, too, before long. What could be more unpicturesque than the modern soldier—more ridiculous than the modern sailor—I mean their costumes.

5 THE BALLOON SHED

I only know of this one "balloon shed" in the country. Probably in design it is out of date, but pictorially it is fine.

6 AEROPLANES AT REST ON THE PLAIN

Why again is there such a swing and lift about these lines? Because they are right and strong lines—and when the machines stand about how like they are to great clumsy birds!—and when they try to start, too; but once they have started how beautiful they are!

7 THE BIRDS OF WAR

Like birds—and they are birds—the planes chase each other around the field. Now they soar, then they dive, in the sun they glitter, in the shadows they disappear; and far and near, high and low, they rise, they soar, they plunge, and then they skim, feeling for the ground, and then they come to rest upon it—the Birds of War.

8 THE LARKS

"Hark, hark, the lark!" This one sings a song, too, all his own, as he soars up to greet the coming sun, then away to battle, or to train for it—Our Lark.

9 HYDROPLANES AT REST ON THE BEACH

Why do they remind one of Greek warriors with their proud helmets? I do not know, but they do. I suppose—in fact, it is because the line of the rudder is that of the

crest of a helmet. Did the aeroplane builder steal, borrow, invent it? I once invented, out of my head and a honeysuckle, another phase of Greek art, but no one would believe me.

10 LAUNCHING THE HYDROPLANES—PUTTING OUT TO SEA

“Somewhere” at an aviation post, every morning early, the aeroplanes start seaward, pushed and coaxed and pulled along like a stubborn mule—and about as beautiful—but once they are up and away, after splashing and floundering clumsily, how calm, how graceful, how serene they are as they move in and out amid the clouds in sunlight and shadow, over the summer ship-decked sea!

11 UNLOADING ORE

When the great ore boats arrive “somewhere” they draw up at a crane-covered dock and almost as fast as they are loaded they are emptied—and the ore is in the furnace—then they steam away for more.

12 THE FORGES

How fine are the effects! One man said as I drew the figure leaning back to rest: “Hully Gee! He’s got Creeper all right. Look at his pants!” But the noise is awful, and one day, as I sat on a bit of boiler, a roar ten times worse than ever before broke out beneath me and I jumped right off and from the boiler crawled a grimy human who, putting his hand to his mouth, yelled: “What yer making all that racket fur?”

13 THE RIVETERS

What perpendicular cathedral is as full of mystery as this shop? I know of none and I know most of them; and when the fires glow on the work-altar and the great jaws pierce and rivet the boiler plates one hears the Hymn of Work.

14 THE BIGGEST LATHE IN THE WORLD

Many of the subjects I have chosen are probably the “biggest in the world” and the most impressive too—

that is the reason why I have drawn them. I have seen great lathes and great guns in Europe, but this one is certainly greater than any other.

"You couldn't do that, Fatty," said the man. "Couldn't I?" said the other. "You bet I could if I had been at it as long as him." It was the second lathe I have drawn.

15 BUILDING ENGINES FOR THE ALLIES

In serried lines they stood—first one for Russia—then one for France—and on the other side several for ourselves—and I said, "Why, this is Ford's idea!" for the parts came in at the sides of the shop and the finished engine went out at the end. "Oh, yes!" said the manager, "only we have been doing it twenty years." Now they build a locomotive in four days.

16 MAKING WAR LOCOMOTIVES

Big and little, they are being turned out for work in Europe and work at home—war work—and I could not forget that I had seen the same sort of work on the same sorts of locomotives being done on the Isthmus; only that was for peace—that the locomotives should help to build the Panama Canal, as they did—build the great thing of modern times, a work by which American engineers will be remembered, their memory blessed.

17 THE FLYING LOCOMOTIVE

Yes, locomotives can soar—can fly—and, like Mahomet's coffin, stand in the air; and they do these things in a blaze of glory—because the shop where they are built is not big enough to shift them about in any other way. As the engine sailed toward me I tried to make a note of it. "Why—would you like to draw it?" said the manager, as I frantically went on making notes of the approaching monster. "Which end would you like up?" He made a signal—they don't talk in these shops—it stopped, and there it hung. "Bring on another," signaled the manager—and so I drew and so the creature posed till I had finished—an excellent model in a wonderful studio.

18 THE ARMOR PLATE PRESS

The English maker rolls rapidly his armor plate in heat and smoke and flame. The American slowly presses it, but with a press so powerful that it will crush the huge ingot, so sensitive that it will not break a watch crystal placed under it.

19 IN THE LAND OF BROBDINGNAG—THE ARMOR PLATE BENDING PRESSES

Only Swift never imagined and Gulliver never saw presses and ladles and chains and cranes like these; but I have seen them, and there is no imagination in my study of the press or the ladle. A press so powerful it will slowly bend the thickest plate. A ladle so big the men were lost in it.

20 THE WHITE AND THE BLACK HAMMERS

"The biggest hammer in the world," said the foreman. Maybe—anyway, the shop was amongst the most pictorial of all those I have drawn devoted to shell making.

"Say, Friend," said the workman, "won't they let yer use a machine in war time? Is that why youse does it by hand?"

21 THE LITTLE MEN OF THE BIG HAMMER

One seated on high worked the hammer; fast or slow, light or heavy were its blows, as he wished. Two beneath turned the big shell as it lay in its bed between and was pounded into shape, and every time the hammer fell a pillar of fire and a cloud of steam arose, and through all and over all were the crane men in their pulpits whistling and shouting and signaling, moving forth and back, silhouetted against the lights lost in the shadows. And in this shop as red hot shells flew about or rolled about singly or by dozens one said, "Now then, Cap, in this here shop yer jes' got ter look six ways for Sunday. That there crane man's all right, but might forget youse was under; an' if that claw give yer a pat, why, youse 'u'd have a week off in the hospittle."

22 FORGING SHELLS—THE SLAVES OF THE WHEEL

No composition could be finer, no movement more expressive—no grouping more perfect, and yet all this was happening every day and all day in an oily, dirty, greasy, smoky shell factory where no artist had ever worked before, and the workmen, black men, were turning the big shell, under the big hammer, by the big capstan wheel that held it, and I noted in the shop that the black men saw more in my drawings than the white, yet there is only one black painter in the country.

23 SHELL FACTORY NO. 1

When I got there I showed my Government letter. "Um," said the guard—and the sentinel with his gun was behind him—"You jus' don' come in here, ole man, on that pass. Gover'ment! The boss is the Gover'ment! I'm the Ajertant! This here's the Lootenant! The Lor' Gawd A'mighty won't pass in on that pass! No Suh!" But the next time I came the guard presented arms, and it is in this wonderful shop that the shells are made for the Allies and ourselves.

24 SHELL FACTORY NO. 2—FROM SHOP TO SHOP

The contrast between the dark old shop and bright new one was wonderful.

"Pretty good, Dad," said a precocious apprentice. I suppose they don't mean anything but compliments, still I never fail to lose my temper. Then the peace-maker appears. "Don't mind that kid, mate, he dunno no better; he's edurcated. Say, wot paper's it comin' out in—I'll buy that paper." That was a compliment.

25 CASTING SHELLS

Slowly the ladle moves, carried by the crane man, steered by the workmen, goggled and gloved—I had no time to draw these details. Into each mould it dropped just enough molten metal to make a shell head. And when all the moulds were filled, a man from another shop dropped in. "Say, what youse up to now?" "Me?"

I'm makin' shells for the Kaiser." "What! an' here!" "Sure"—and as a French inspector passed—"Ain't we sending 'em to him as quick as we kin?"

26 SHAPING A GUN FROM AN INGOT

When the ingot comes from the furnace, it is put in this press, deep buried in a pit, and the hot metal is compressed into the shape of a section of a great gun. Then it is taken out and bored and planed and finally, after about a year of work, the gun is ready to do its work.

27 THE GUN PIT NO. 1

These pits which I have drawn in Europe and America have the greatest individuality of all the processes of war industry. The buildings are most impressive, towering, windowless, sombre without, mysterious within, filled with strong shadows and strange shapes.

And as I looked out from the blackness to the ore crane making new ranges of Alps on its hillside, I wanted a gun—or rather wanted to know how it was moved.

"Why, bring him one," said the manager—and it came and posed while I drew, and was such a good sitter. And so I find my studio and my models wherever I work.

28 GUN PIT NO. 2

No better proof could be shown of the way each big plant puts big character into its products than this and the previous drawing. Here everything is done deep down under ground; in the other shop it is all above, away up high in the air. And one day, they told me, the president of the company passed with a party, and he saw a man, tired out, sitting with his head in his hands. "Why don't you clean out the pit, boy?" "Well, Sammie, if you want to know why, you go down an' find out for yourself."

29 THE GUN FACTORY

So like a British one that I wonder which one got the idea of arrangement of the shop from the other. There the guns are turned; and one man said to me: "Well, I

don't know whether I'll be drafted by the U. S.—but I do know I'd sooner waste my time makin' guns, than spend it hearin' 'em shot at me."

30 THE GUN-TESTING GROUND

Into the rocky cliff great holes had been bored, and the guns, mounted on their carriages by the great gantry, were fired, the shells passing through wires mounted on screens to test their velocity. One thing that interested me, standing behind the guns—interested me too much, really—was, that there was no smoke, save that which came out of the hole where the shell exploded. And another fact was, that I could not see the shell in its flight—nor can those at whom it is fired—it goes so fast the sound cannot keep up with it, sight cannot note it.

31 MAKING RIFLES

Gallery after gallery is like this in a great building, all filled with tiny men working at tiny machines to make the tiny guns they fight with; and over them hangs the flag of our country, put there, the director told me, not by the management but by the men.

32 MAKING A TURBINE ENGINE

This is the finest shop, in which the most impressive work of modern times is done, and it is somewhere in America; and as I worked away after five, one man said: "Wot's yer hours, mate?"

33 MAKING PROPELLER BLADES

Blue in the shadows, and such blue!—gold in the light, and such gold!—were those blades—in this great shop—and as I worked the engines steamed in and a propeller went out to fit in the ship standing in the dock just outside.

34 THE TRANSPORTS

The spoils of war, for what had been great traders were now to be great troop-ships—and with their transformation what an awful change has come to our world!

35 THE COLLIER

This is a freighter and collier and the huge erections on its deck are cranes and derricks by which other ships are coaled and loaded at sea. The system is not new, but I imagine many landsmen, like myself till I drew it, have never seen such a creature.

36 THE OLD AND THE NEW

Whether the old wooden ship is finer in line than the new steel monster is more than I can decide, but I do know that both are well worth drawing.

37 READY FOR SERVICE AGAIN

Just as retired officers have offered their services again to the country—so these old ships, even more pictorial than the new, are being found places where they can do their "bit."

38 UNDER THE SHED

It seemed as though this yard was built for me, and if I had not found it so practical I should have thought it only pictorial.

But in the shed, in rows, in piles, in layers, lay every part of the ship ready to fit together, all in order. As I drew boats, boilers came out of the shed and went to their places on board.

39 THE BOAT BUILDERS

"I'm jus' real proud of this hull shop, I'm jus' certain jack proud of it," said the foreman; and what could be more graceful than the lines of these wooden boats—all the boats of battle-ships seem made of wood. How beautiful are their lines, the result of tradition! The boat builder is no cubist as he works out his drawings on the floor of the shop, and the result is strength and beauty.

40 BUILDING SUBMARINE CHASERS

All round the big ship the little boats gathered—being built out of doors wherever there is water into which the

crane may swing them, as soon as they are made. It is like this they are being built all over the country.

41 SUBMARINES IN PORT

Submarines are practical, but not picturesque. "Why do you draw 'em?" said the usual inquirer. "Why do you make drawings, anyway?" "Oh, for fun," says I. "Huh! That's what I thought," says he as he left.

42 SUBMARINES IN DRY-DOCK

There they lay in long lines—soon to be ready to start on their venturesome voyages.

43 BUILDING DESTROYERS

Amid the great ways the little destroyers are built. While the work of building is going on, there seem to be no workmen about—though the noise they make is terrible. The various parts of the ships lie about apparently in confusion, but the crane knows what it wants and where to find it and picks it up and carries it to its proper place. It is only when the men knock off that you see what an army is engaged in shipbuilding. And it was too funny, to be told as I went about, I could not smoke—yet hundreds of drills and riveters are shedding showers of sparks and there is nothing but iron about.

44 BUILDING DESTROYERS No. 2

How the cranes minister to the ships, carrying them the things they want, lowering them gently into the places where they belong, and then hovering over the vessels they are building, to see that everything is in its proper place—the cranes do it all—the men who run them are mere details.

45 IN THE DRY DOCK

These are the things that tower—that shine—whose power is terrible—but their smile does not make glad. The officer said he could not see the ship like that. "Don't you wish you could?" was the only answer I could think of.

46 THE ANTS

She came into the dry dock "at an Atlantic port." The water was pumped out, ropes were dropped over the side, and when the water was out men at the bottom of the locks fastened planks to them, and the crew, with buckets of paint and brushes, long, little, short, and big, swarmed over the sides and fell, with the paint, upon the ship, and while I stared and tried to draw, she was painted, both sides of her, and her propellers were polished like gold, by the ants—only ants don't work like that, only American sailors, and a few weeks before many of them had never seen a big ship.

47 THE KEEL

The shipyards are endless and their forms are endless and ever new—but I never before found one where from the water I could look down on the ship while it grew as it did here, amid its forests, its walls—which it would soon tower over.

48 BUILDING THE BATTLESHIP

Inside the huge shed where she was built and launched, she lay, getting her finishing touches—or rather those that could be given her, for her masts were too big to finish—her turrets were being fitted and her turbines put in—and soon she would begin her life of terror and horror.

49 READY TO START

Dignified, solemn, immense she stood, held to the dock by the great cables; and the great cranes swung great car loads of war work aboard her, as fast as the engines could bring them.

On land she was guarded by marines. In the air the planes were guarding her.

50 THE PROW

"Very pretty drawing," said the Admiral when I showed him this leering, staring, slobbering monster, the spirit of war, a creation of our time and our country. It is fascinating but it is intolerable.

